



MONTENEGRO
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS



ADRIATIC AND IONIAN INITIATIVE
CHAIRMANSHIP OF MONTENEGRO
JUNE 2010 – MAY 2011

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Meeting of the Senior Officials 15-16 February 2011, Ancona

AGREED MINUTES

The second meeting of the Adriatic Ionian Initiative (AII) Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) under the Montenegrin Chairmanship was held on February 16th 2011 in Ancona. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Igor Gradjević of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro with the support of the Secretary General of the AII Permanent Secretariat Amb. Alessandro Grafini.

After welcoming the delegates Mr. Gradjević introduced the meeting by proposing the Agenda that was approved with no objections.

In **point 2 of the Agenda**, the Chairman reminded the 1st CSO meeting under Montenegrin Chairmanship (Podgorica, 28 June 2010) with the participation of State Secretary Mantica was an important step towards the realization of the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region. He also recalled the AII Round Tables that have been organized in Montenegro until now (Inter-University Cooperation, Small and Medium Enterprises, Tourism and Maritime Cooperation). In conclusion, he informed the delegates about the proposal by the Committee of the Regions of the EU to organize the next AI Council in Brussels on the 23rd of May 2011. Considered this, the CSO preparing the AIC will have place on Sunday the 22nd of May. Amb. Grafini informed that Region Marche will put at disposal its seat in Brussels for the organisation of the CSO.

An updated calendar of events of the Montenegrin Chairmanships was distributed to the delegates with the specification that the Parliamentary Meeting will be held at the level of the Speakers of the Parliament in Budva (11-13 April 2011).

Italy stressed the importance to have the AIC in Brussels also to show AII strong commitment for the Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region to the EU Commission. Greece thanked the Chairmanship for its involvement in promoting the Macro-Region and appreciated the presence of the President of UniAdrion and the Vice-President of the Adriatic Ionian Forum of Chambers of Commerce in the second part of the CSO .

The Chairman introduced **point 3 of the Agenda** by announcing the will to organize an Forum on Fisheries of the Adriatic Ionian Basin in Ancona on the 8 of April and gave the floor to AII-PS Secretary General. Amb. Grafini reminded that this will be a first attempt to cooperate on fisheries in the AII framework. Our sea is a closed basin therefore, the coastal countries are obliged to cooperate particularly to protect the ecological system of the sea. The sub-regional approach to the problem has been recognized as the best way to solve problems in the Mediterranean Sea also by the EU Commission. Therefore, initiatives such the AII have now a great opportunity to foster development in Maritime Cooperation. At the moment there are preparatory meetings going on in order to organize in the best way the Forum that will have place at the premises of the International Fishing Fair of Ancona. The idea is to bring all stakeholder together (Ministries, associations, research centers...) in order to close the Forum with a shared Declaration as a basis for the Protocol to be signed by the end of Montenegrin Chairmanship.

Mrs. Pariat, Director General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the EU Commission (for the first time a member of the Commission participated actively to a CSO), welcomed the initiative of the Forum on Fisheries. She underlined that fisheries is one of the priority areas, identified by the EU Commission, for the Adriatic Ionian Region. The questions to put on the table, for this region, should be the improvement of scientific knowledge, coordination of control of fishing activities, the need of a coordinated management of resources, sustainable and competitive fishing industry. The EU Commission will be glad to give support also in the organizational phase of the Forum. Mrs. Pariat confirmed the importance of a sub-regional approach particularly in the field of fisheries and reminded that something has already been done and should be exploited. The AdriaMed project for the development of joint scientific knowledge could be a base to start cooperation. Finally, Mrs. Pariat stressed the importance of the EU Mediterranean

Regulation for fisheries. Putting non member states in the condition to respect it before their accession would be an important asset for their integration process. This implies a lot of preparation and revision of fishing activities, and EU member countries can give a great help.

Italy gave full support to the Forum and particularly to the idea to reach an agreement among AII Countries and sign a Protocol with EU standards. This will be a positive step towards EU accession.

(The Senior Officials are kindly requested to indicate a contact point for the preparation of the documents for the Forum on Fisheries. It could be organized a drafting session by mid March).

Under **point 4 of the Agenda**, the Chairman reaffirmed the AII strong involvement for the establishment of an Adriatic Ionian Macro-Region and gave the floor to the Serbian delegation in order to give a comparative outlook of the Danube Strategy. Serbia explained that the EU Strategy for the Danube was accepted in 2009 and the EC voted for the final text in December 2010. It is expected that the Danube Strategy will be adopted under Hungarian presidency on the session of the Council of June 24 this year. 14 Countries have prepared the Strategy (8 EU members). Serbia will be coordinator of 2 priority fields among the 11 that have been agreed upon. On these basis it was established a working group charged of making a list of priority projects to activate. One of the most important project proposed is the Danube Media Center seated in Novi Sad with the idea that the EU Strategy should be covered also by media and in all Danube languages. Finally, Serbia will organize at the beginning of April a meeting of the Presidents of the Parliaments of Danube Countries in Novi Sad.

Amb. Grafini reminded how the Adriatic Ionian Initiative has become the promoter, since the beginning of a EU Strategy for the Adriatic Ionian Basin, particularly with the declaration of AII Ministries of Foreign Affairs during the Adriatic Ionian Council in Ancona (5 May 2010). Now it will be important to involve all sectors of the society in order to decide about the content of the EU Strategy. The new involvement of the EU Commission in the AII activities is certainly a very positive boost to our work.

Under **point 5 of the Agenda**, the Chairman introduced the discussion on the modification of the AIC Rules of Procedure adopted in Zagreb (24 November 2000). Amb. Grafini stated that since the year 2000 many things have changed within the AII from the political (accession of new countries such Montenegro and Serbia) and structural (establishment of a Permanent Secretariat and new Rules of Procedure of the AII Round Tables approved in Zagreb on the 26th of May 2008) point of view. Therefore a revision of a document adopted in 2000 is necessary in order to keep it up to date.

The Chairman read all proposed modification. There was no objection to them. Albania proposed to specify the date of the Ancona Conference mentioned in point 1 of the AIC Rules of Procedure. The new document with modifications, to be approved by the Adriatic Ionian Council closing the Montenegrin Chairmanship is attached. Amb. Grafini reminded that this will be a point of the Agenda of next CSO that will have to prepare a recommendation to the AIC on the matter.

Under **point 6 of the Agenda** were discussed some issue related to the Permanent Secretariat. Amb. Grafini reminded that the Rules of Procedure of the AII-PS approved in Zagreb (27 May 2008) state that after the first three years initial term, subsequent stages of the operations of the AII-PS “shall be considered in the future by the Committee of Senior Officials” (art. 18). The Secretary General invited the representatives of all countries to express their view on the matter and decide about the continuation of AII-PS activities. All Senior Officials, with no exceptions, considered the utility of the AII-PS and the need to continue its efficient work. Greece considered it very useful for the AII institutional memory, Italy mentioned also the importance of carrying on projects of common interest, Bosnia Herzegovina considered that is now unavoidable the existence of the AII-PS. All other representatives gave also full support to the Permanent Secretariat for its continuity.

Having received the approval by all countries, amb. Grafini reminded that the AI Council (5th of May 2010) decided that the “*The AII-PS shall possess the capacity to contract, to acquire and dispose of movable and immovable property according to the rules of the host country*”. Since it was decided not to sign an international treaty until now, the AII-PS has worked to get the Italian legal personality by establishing a Foundation under Italian law (named “Fondazione Segretariato Permenente dell’Iniziativa Adriatico Ionica”) with the participation of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Region Marche, University of

Ancona (UniAdrion), the Chamber of Commerce of Ancona (Forum AIC). The Foundation is mainly financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign affairs with some minor contributions by the other associates. The possibility to enlarge the circle of the supporters also to foreign entities is open.

Italy intervened being deeply involved in the Foundation and stated that the Foundation is opened to the participation of any other AII country contributing at least with 10.000 euros.

Slovenia asked if the AII-PS staff is made of only Italian personnel and if there is the opportunity of having foreign staff. Amb. Grafini answered by citing art. 11 of the AII-PS Guidelines and Rules of Procedure: "The Participating States may second staff to the Secretariat". Therefore the opportunity to have foreign staff is welcomed if they are seconded by their own Ministries.

In conclusion, Italy informed that has been in contact with all AII Ministries of Foreign affairs and that received support from all countries, with one provisional exception, for the proposal to appoint Amb. Pigliapoco (at present Ambassador in Prague) as the new AII-PS Secretary General starting from June 2011. Amb. Pigliapoco has gained an important experience in the area as he has already been coordinator for regional cooperation (CEI and AII) and Ambassador in Zagreb.

Amb. Grafini informed that the mandate of the first AII-PS Secretary General will end on the 18th of June, precisely 3 years after the establishment of the AII Permanent Secretariat (Inauguration by the Greek Presidency in Ancona - Min. Doukas - 19 June 2008). The appointment of the new Secretary General should be prepared by an official recommendation of the CSO (22nd May 2011) for the unanimous endorsement of the AIC in Bruxelles (23rd May 2011). Serbia intervened by informing the Senior Officials that the 1st CSO under Serbian Presidency will have place during the week starting from the 20th of June 2011 and that in that occasion a ceremony could have place in order to give the farewell to Amb. Grafini and the welcome to the new Secretary General. Both, the outgoing and the incoming Secretary General will be invited to participate.